

Highlights

Thousands of students complete their educational programs at British Columbia's public colleges and institutes each year. Colleges and institutes, along with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, recognize that student feedback is important to maintaining a high-quality, relevant post-secondary education system.

The BC College and Institute Student Outcomes Survey attempts to contact former students by telephone 9–15 months after they complete all, or a significant portion, of their program. The survey asks former students what they have done since leaving and if they were satisfied with the education they received.

This report highlights the findings from the **Student Outcomes Survey** conducted in the spring of 1999. The results are based on input from 16,681 of 33,852 eligible former students from BC's 21 public colleges and institutes.

Did students achieve their goals?

Former college and institute students offered a variety of reasons when asked why they enrolled in their programs. Approximately 40 percent of former students said they had enrolled to obtain job skills, 34 percent to obtain a credential, and 20 percent to obtain both job skills and a credential.

Of those who had enrolled to obtain job skills, 86 percent were employed a year after leaving their program. Eighty-seven percent of students from applied programs—77 percent of whom enrolled to obtain job skills—were employed a year after leaving their program. When asked if they felt they had achieved the goals they had for enrolling, 87 percent of these students said they "completely" or "mostly" had.

Of those who had enrolled to prepare to transfer to another institution or qualify to enter another program, 74 percent went on to further studies after leaving their program. Eighty-one percent of arts and sciences students, took some type of further education after leaving their program. Eighty-three percent of these students felt they had "completely" or "mostly" achieved the goals they had for enrolling.

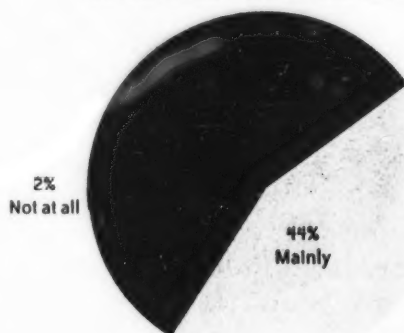
The 1999 Highlights answers six main questions:

- Did students achieve their goals?
- Were former students satisfied with their education?
- Were former students satisfied with their campus services?
- How did students pay for their education?
- What were former students' further education and employment outcomes?
- Who are former students?

Were former students satisfied with their education?

Eighty-four percent of former students were "completely" or "mainly" satisfied with their education. With respect to specific aspects of their educational experiences, 87 percent of former students said the quality of teaching they received was "very good" or "good." Seventy-eight percent felt the availability of instructors outside of class was "very good" or "good" and 74 percent said the same about the organization of their program.

Overall Satisfaction with Studies



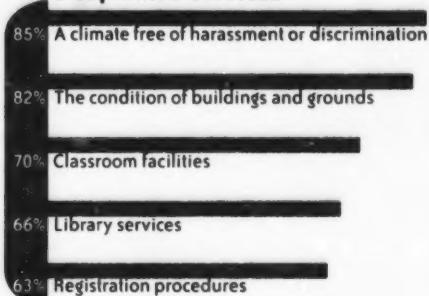
"I got a job so I accomplished my main goal" – Former BCIT Student

The 1999 survey included two special sections. Half of former students who were surveyed were asked about campus services at their institution and the other half about their finances while going to school.

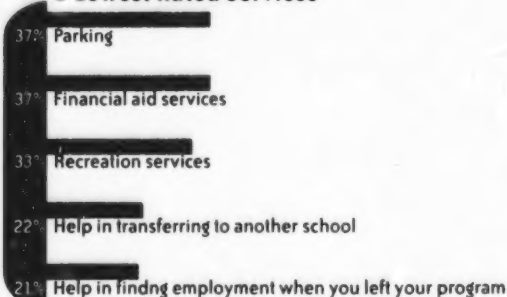
Were former students satisfied with their campus services?

Overall, former students were generally positive about the services their institutions provided. The following tables list the five highest and lowest rated services.

5 Top Rated Services



5 Lowest Rated Services



*Percentages are of former students who rated services "good" or "very good"

Approximately fifty percent of those who responded to the special questions on services indicated that help finding employment and transferring to another school, recreation facilities and campus financial aid services were "not applicable" to their programs.

"The teaching was excellent..."

— Former Camosun Student

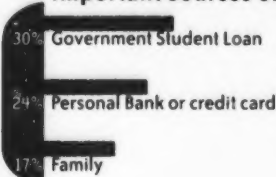
How did students pay for their education?

The cost of post-secondary education is a concern for many students and their families. The survey asked questions on the sources of income former students had while they were studying and their debts after leaving school.

Many students said that employment, either during breaks from school (65%) or while studying (54%), was "very" or "somewhat" important to financing their education. Former students also used personal savings to pay their way through school, with 64% saying this source of funds was important. Close to half of students said direct, non-repayable, financial support from their families was important.

Government student loans, personal bank or credit card loans, and loans from family members were also important sources of funds for many former students while they were in school.

Important Sources of Borrowed Funds



*Percent who said "very" or "somewhat" important

For the 30 percent of survey respondents who considered government student loans important, the average accumulated debt from government loans was \$9,880, after remission. There was a considerable range in the amount former students owed after leaving their programs: 32 percent owed under \$5,000, while 13 percent owed \$20,000 or more.

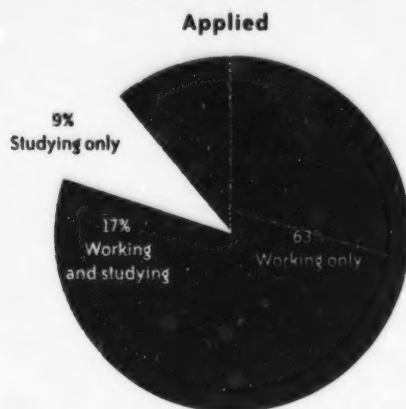
Some government student loan recipients reported borrowing from other sources, such as banks and family members, as well. For those students, the average amount owed at the end of college program was \$16,600.

Many former students (81%) kept their education costs down by studying in their home communities, while approximately fifty percent saved money by taking advantage of free or subsidized room and board from their families.

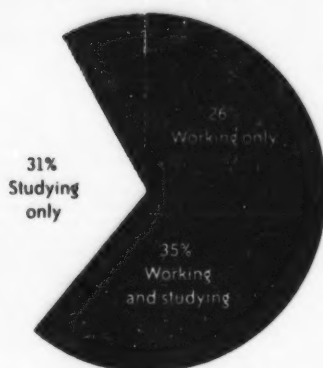
What were former students' further education and employment outcomes?

A year after leaving school the majority of former students were "working only" or "working and studying." Many others were "studying only" or doing a variety of "other" things.

Current Activity by Program Type



Arts and Sciences



Eighty-five percent of former students were in the labour force—either working or looking for work—a year after leaving their program. Of these former students, 61 percent were employed full-time and 23 percent part-time. Sixty-two percent of these former students said their jobs were "very" or "somewhat" related to their studies. For employed former students from applied programs—programs designed to prepare students for work—the number who said their jobs were "very" or "somewhat" related to their studies was higher (77%).

Forty-seven percent of all former students reported they pursued some kind of further education after leaving their

programs. Eighty-one percent of these students said their further studies were "very" or "somewhat" related to their previous studies. Of students taking related programs 95 percent said their previous studies had "very" or "somewhat" prepared them for their current studies.

"It was a great transitional program.

It helped prepare me for University"

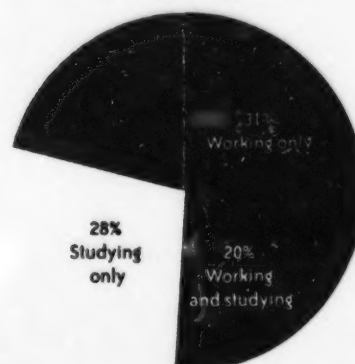
Former University College of the Fraser Valley Student

Adult Basic Education

In 1999 the number of former students surveyed who were enrolled in ABE courses was significantly expanded. Previously only former students who had completed three or more ABE courses were included in the survey, but in 1999 six institutions participated in a pilot study of former ABE students who had taken one or more ABE courses. For the 1999 survey 5374 students were included in the ABE cohort, compared to 2839 in 1998.

Many former ABE students enrolled to obtain a credential (48%), usually a secondary school diploma. A smaller number of students enrolled to obtain job-skills (22%). Seventy-nine percent of former ABE students felt they "completely" or "mostly" achieved the goals they had for enrolling. Half of former ABE students (51%) were either "working only" or "working" and studying" a year after leaving their program, and half were "studying only" or involved in "other" activities as well.

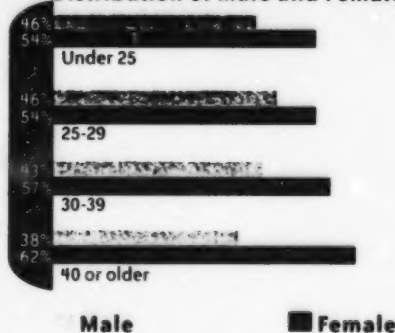
Adult Basic Education



Who are former students?

Fifty-five percent of all former students surveyed were female and they outnumbered male students in every age group. The age distribution was about the same for both genders, slightly less than half were under 25 years of age at the time of the survey.

Distribution of Male and Female Students



Ninety percent of respondents had completed high school prior to enrolling in their college or institute and 23 percent had completed a post-secondary level credential.

English was a second language for 16 percent of all respondents. Nine percent of respondents learned English before the age of 13, 4 percent as teenagers and 4 percent as adults.

Half of all respondents were asked about their family situation during their studies. Sixty-five percent of these respondents were single with no children, 12 percent were part of a couple with no children, 15 percent were part of a couple with children, and 8 percent were single parents. Of those respondents with children, over 70 percent had either one or two children living with them during their studies.

More information

Under the guidance of the BC Outcomes Working Group, CEISS produces a range of reports based on the results of the **Student Outcomes Survey**. A series of more detailed reports from the 1999 survey will be released during the summer and fall of 2000.



BRITISH COLUMBIA Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology



Centre For Education Information

"I liked that I could stay close to home and study"

— Former Northern Lights College Student

What is the Student Outcomes Survey Project?

The BC College and Institute Student Outcomes Project is conducted with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and BC's public colleges and institutes.

The British Columbia Outcomes Working Group (OWG) oversees all aspects of the former student follow-up survey, from data collection through to the reporting of results. The OWG is a decade-old partnership between colleges and institutes and system bodies, such as the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, the Advanced Education Council of BC and the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer. The partnership is one of shared interests, funding and expertise.

How are the survey results used?

- By colleges and institutes to evaluate program offerings and services
- To support decision-making and program evaluation by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology
- To enhance understanding of the labour market

If you would like more information about **Student Outcomes Reports**, please contact:

The Centre for Education Information
4th floor, 1483 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC V8W 3K4
Tel (250) 413-4400
www.ceiss.org

ISSN Number: 1488-5336